

PROBLEMS AND CRISES OF
DEVELOPMENT 421

adults who make up his social world should represent to him a stable and ordered world of values, values closely related to the child's real abilities at any given age, and based upon an understanding of his psychological needs, but which are, nevertheless, firm and unwavering in themselves. Young children do need to feel that the adults around them are stronger than themselves and represent, not the forces of destruction, but those of ordered creation. There are times with every child when he needs to feel that he can be *made* to do things, that those whom he loves are not at the mercy of his own ungovernable instincts but are firmer and stronger and more reliable than he. If he is able to feel that he can do what he likes with them, he will suffer more acutely from the dread of *inner* retribution. It is to be remembered, again, that the phantastic super-ego which the child dreads within himself is built upon the earliest oral pattern, and that he finds relief from this dread of being attacked, bitten, eaten up, by discovering that the real parents can restrain and control him *without* eating him up. He finds relief from inner tension by being able to project his super-ego on to real adults who will exercise it for him. If that real external control is firm and secure, but mild and tempered, it enables the child to master his destructive impulses and to learn to order and adapt his wishes to the real world. If he neither finds fulfilment of his phantastic dreads in the outer world, nor is left at their mercy in his inner world by having no external support, but is slowly educated by a tempered, real control, mild and understanding, appropriate to each situation as it arises, he is led forward on the path of reality and towards all those indirect satisfactions in the real world,

the sublimatory activities.

This, then, is the ultimate basis for the sensible practice of the trained educator, who provides a settled framework of control and routine, and definite help along social paths, yet with ample personal freedom, a practice which is fortunately to be found to-day in many a well-ordered nursery and nursery school. This, too, is the corrective for the idea that the child will never learn unless he is scolded or smacked, no less than for the notion that he need not learn, but need only bring out the good that is in him. The child can bring out the good that is in him, provided he is given support against his fears of the bad.